

issues. We created NIFA, and that was very helpful, and issued the bonds, and did that. But aside from that, we have not made a targeted effort to reach out and work with communities, from the state level, to address concerns that they have in finding housing for their communities. This has been a problem, not only in our larger cities, which we know is the situation in Omaha, and we have a problem in Lincoln, but we have it in our smaller communities, we've seen it across the state of Nebraska. From Scottsbluff, where Senator Hillman is, to Senator Klein's home town in Norfolk, to Lexington, Senator Cudaback's, and across the state, we have seen a need for additional housing. The state has NIFA, but that's it. The question is, how can we do something about it? The answer is we set up a trust fund, as some other states have set up, you put state money into this, and then you use that money to leverage federal dollars, private dollars, other resources. And what they have found is trust funds can leverage, for every dollar they have, eight dollars in additional funding that can then blossom into homes that are affordable to individuals. The reason money is not put into the bill to fund it at this time is that the task force, in working through that issue, could not reach agreement on the funding source. There was talk of a number of options. The feeling was we need more time on that point. But rather than wait to come back with that answer along with the trust fund itself, the thinking was let's get the trust fund in place, because everybody is in agreement on that in terms of the housing industry and those involved with housing. That element, there's not a question about how it's structured, and focused and what it needs to do. Let's put that in statute so that's off the table. Then the second question of its funding source, that can be worked on, and that's part of this bill that will be looked at over the course of the next year. That's not a cop-out, that's simply reality of how these issues evolve. And in the end, housing should be on the table as we discuss budget matters next year, and funding sources will be a topic next year as well. But I think rather than wait, let's take what we have an agreement on and move forward with it. On the task force they will look at the question of codes. The thing I want to emphasize here is I come from this as an individual that passed the state building code, in fact that's how I met Senator Withem, years ago, as a representative in the housing industry. He was involved in that task force. It took a long time to pass, but eventually we did it. I believe in strong codes. I think we need to have adequate quality in our homes and that we